

About The FCC

FCC Consumer Facts

Background

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is an independent United States government agency that regulates communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable; its jurisdiction covers the 50 States and territories. The Communications Act of 1934 established the FCC, which is directly responsible to Congress.

Five Commissioners direct the FCC. All five are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Only three Commissioners can be of the same political party and none can have a financial interest in any Commission-related business. From the Commissioners, the President selects one person to serve as Chairperson. All Commissioners, including the Chairperson, have a five-year term, except when filling an unexpired term.

Organization

The FCC's staff is organized by function. There are six operating Bureaus and 10 staff Offices. The Bureaus process applications for licenses and other filings, analyze complaints, conduct investigations, develop and implement regulatory programs, and participate in hearings, among other things. The Offices provide support services. Bureaus and Offices regularly join forces and share expertise in addressing FCC issues.

FCC Bureaus

The Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB) develops and implements the Commission's consumer policies, including disability access. The Bureau serves as the public face of the Commission through outreach education, as well as through the Consumer Center which is responsible for responding to consumer inquiries and complaints. CGB also maintains collaborative partnerships with state, local, and tribal governments in such critical areas as emergency preparedness and implementation of new technologies.

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FCC Bureaus (cont'd.)

- **The Enforcement Bureau (EB)** enforces the Communications Act and the FCC's rules. The Enforcement Bureau protects consumers, fosters efficient use of the spectrum, furthers public safety, and promotes competition.
- **The International Bureau (IB)** administers the FCC's international telecommunications and satellite programs and policies, including licensing and regulatory functions. The Bureau also has a unique role in promoting pro-competitive policies abroad, coordinating the FCC's global spectrum activities, and advocating U.S. interests in international communications and competition fora. The Bureau works to promote a high quality, reliable, globally interconnected and interoperable communications infrastructure.

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FCC Bureaus (cont'd.)

- **The Media Bureau (MB)** recommends, develops, and administers the policy and licensing programs relating to electronic media, including cable and broadcast television, as well as radio in the United States and its territories.
- **The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB)** regulates all FCC domestic wireless telecommunications programs and policies, including licensing. Wireless communications services include cellular, paging, personal communications services, public safety, and other commercial and private radio services. The Bureau also implements competitive bidding for spectrum auctions.
- **The Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB)** develops and recommends policy goals, objectives, programs and plans for the FCC on matters concerning wireline telecommunications, such as universal service and the deployment of advanced telecommunications services.

FCC Offices

- **The Office of Administrative Law Judges** is composed of judges who preside over hearings and issue decisions.
- **The Office of Communication Business Opportunities** promotes competition and innovation in the provision and ownership of telecommunications and information services by supporting opportunities for small, women, and minority-owned communications businesses.

FCC Offices (cont'd.)

- **The Office of Engineering and Technology (OET)** advises the FCC on technical and engineering matters. OET develops and administers FCC decisions regarding spectrum allocations, and grants equipment authorizations, experimental licenses, and special temporary authority to operate.
- **The Office of the General Counsel (OGC)** is the FCC's chief legal advisor.
- **The Office of the Inspector General** conducts and supervises audits and investigations relating to FCC programs and operations.
- **The Office of Legislative Affairs** is the liaison between the FCC and Congress, as well as other federal agencies.
- **The Office of the Managing Director** is responsible for the administration and management of the FCC.
- **The Office of Media Relations** informs the media of FCC decisions and serves as the FCC's main point of contact with the media.

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FCC Offices (cont'd.)

- **The Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis** works with the Chairman, Commissioners, Bureaus, and Offices to develop a strategic plan and identify policy objectives for the agency. It also provides research, advice, and analysis of advanced, novel, and non-traditional communications issues.
- **The Office of Workplace Diversity** ensures that the FCC provides employment opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or sexual preference.

For More Information

For general information on other telecommunications-related issues, you may contact the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau in the following ways:

Internet at www.fcc.gov/cgb

Consumer Center:
1-888-Call-FCC (1-888-225-5322) Voice
1-888-Tell-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY

Mail:
Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554.

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For this or any other consumer publication in an accessible format (electronic ASCII text, Braille, large print, or audio) please write or call us at the address or phone number below, or send an e-mail to FCC504@fcc.gov.

To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics through the Commission's electronic subscriber service, click on <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/contacts/>.

This document is for consumer education purposes only and is not intended to affect any proceeding or cases involving this subject matter or related issues.

01/24/06* - cpb

